



City of San Diego
CARL DEMAIO
CITY COUNCILMEMBER – DISTRICT 5

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 26, 2012

TO: Councilmember David Alvarez, Chair, Natural Resources & Culture Committee

FROM: Councilmember Carl DeMaio *Carl DeMaio*

RE: 2012 Natural Resources & Culture Committee Priorities

In response to your memo of January 12, 2012, I have included my priorities for the NR&C Committee in 2012 below.

Oversight of Water Rates

San Diego residents once again experienced an increase in water rates in 2011. With additional rate increases likely coming to Council in the future, the NR&C Committee must be proactive to provide policy solutions which will provide the oversight and reform needed to prevent water rates from increasing.

Within the next year, the Public Utilities Department will likely issue an RFP in order to hire an outside consultant to conduct a Cost of Service Study (COSS). Before that COSS moves forward, I believe that the NR&C Committee should require an analysis of the previous 2006 COSS, as well as a presentation at a Committee meeting.

Renewable Energy in San Diego

The fastest-growing sector of the San Diego economy is solar and other renewable energies. With our sunny climate and strong base of tech companies, many start-up clean tech companies have made the decision to locate in the San Diego region. I believe that the NR&C committee should consider actions and strategies that the City of San Diego can pursue to continue the growth of this important economic sector well into the future.

One important aspect of supporting our solar industry is to ensure that San Diego solar customers continue to have a financial incentive to invest in the cost to install solar systems in their homes and businesses. Last year, San Diego Gas & Electric proposed a rate change which would have raised fees on solar customers, thereby providing a disincentive for this clean technology to continue expanding in San Diego County.

Just this week the “Environment California Research & Policy Center” released a report explaining that San Diego generates more power from grid-connected solar panels on residential, commercial and government buildings than any other city in California. There were more than 4,500 solar installations in the City of San Diego as of August 2011, ahead of any other California city, the Union-Tribune reported this week.

While the California Public Utilities Commission has asked SDG&E to go back to the drawing board on their proposal, the NR&C Committee, City Council, and other local leaders must encourage rate policies that allow for the continued growth of this renewable energy.

A focus on these two areas represents my priorities for the NR&C committee in the coming year.